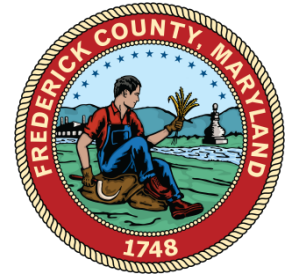




December 18, 2019



Frederick County Sustainability Commission
Meeting Minutes

Present: John Ferri - Chair, Betty Law – Vice Chair, Jennifer Bird - Secretary, Mark Sankey, Ron Kaltenbaugh, Faith Klareich, Elizabeth Van Dolah, Joe Richardson, Kevin Sellner, David Lake, Bill Steigleemann

OSER staff: Dawn Ashbacher, Shannon Moore

Frederick County Council: Kai Hagen

Guests/Public:

Meeting Opening:

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by John Ferri and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

The November meeting minutes were reviewed by the Commission. Ron moved to approve the minutes with minor edits. Betty seconded the motion. Jennifer Bird, John Ferri, and David Lake abstained. The minutes were approved.

Presentation: Collaborative approaches for engaging conservation faith communities in climate change discussions – Elizabeth Van Dolah:

The University of MD, Department of Anthropology has been working with communities on Deal Island to discuss climate change.

The Deal Island Peninsula Project includes a network of stakeholders such as residents, resource managers, scientists, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and Planners to work together to build resilience to climate change.

Two approaches to working together: Collaborative Science and Collaborative Learning.

Focal Project: Engaging Faith Communities for Coastal Resilience

What role can churches play in enhancing collaborative networks between government and rural communities?

Worked in Smithville, Nanticoke Peninsula, and Deal Island

Churches are the social foundation of the local watermen communities.

Climate change is a new and somewhat contentious topic.

As part of the study, the group did interviews with faith leaders, government staff, and NGO representatives.

Coded the role of stewardship, role of church in addressing environmental change, climate change, and science.

The group initiated community conversations to share findings, collect feedback, and open the conversation with church communities on climate change.

Questions posed addressed balancing faith and climate change.

Discussions led to learning the following:

Faith based participants think science is important.

Science is important for predicting the future.

Christian point of view: science has limited predictive capacity.

Science and faith don't have to be in opposition to each other.

Tensions arise when the relationship is framed as "science vs faith"

Faith has an important role to play in discussions about climate change.

Having faith means not having to fret about things outside your control.

The group learned about engaging churches in discussions on climate change.

God is in control of climate futures.

Climate change crisis language is not well received.

Churches want to engage in adaptation discussions to support their communities.

However, churches are unsure how to engage.

Impacts of using a collaborative learning approach in this project:

Given people who have previously felt left out, a place at the table.

Note: MACS is a Frederick Faith based climate change coalition in Frederick MD

OSER Updates –Shannon Moore:

OSER – Compliance with current NPDES permit – OSER determined the county has 720 acres more to restore than thought, while closing out their NPDES permit. Have 140 acres of restoration in place or in construction to address the shortfall.

Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund grant and others have applications open now.

OSER is working with the County Executive (CE) on policy work. The CE is working on updates to the Forest Resource Ordinance and OSER is supporting. The CE is also looking for zoning changes and green infrastructure protections. The CE is very interested in finding innovative ways to protect our forests (43% cover in the county). The county is aiming to preserve the forest we currently have left. Forests are number one indicator for water quality.

Finalizing easement agreements on Creek Releaf projects. Applications are in (170 acres) for this coming year.

Sustainability Awards

The timeframe is generally to present in March at the Green Homes Recognition Ceremony and were announced before that in January.

Categories have been Business, Non-Profit, and Individual.

Joe recommended adding a Student category.

This year's ceremony is March 26.

The applications would be posted online and submitted to various groups in the county. Applications would be due February 14 with voting on February 19.

Green Lecture Series

Betty noted that Jenny Willoughby from the City has run a monthly Green Lecture Program or activity. This year she is interested in four half day events. One idea is a workshop on PACE – Property Assessed Clean Energy loans.

Dawn noted that Jenny is looking for ideas for interactive workshops, like building bee boxes. It may be best to find another venue for PACE discussions.

County Executive Meeting Update:

John distributed copies of the meeting minutes for discussion.

Jenn summarized the minutes and the Commission discussed the various topics.

The CE would like FCSC to review and comment on the new Forest Resource Ordinance.

FCSC could hold joint meetings with other commissions on topics of interest.

FCSC could attend COG meetings and workshops to bring in ideas for Frederick County.

FCSC could assist the CE to identify solutions to climate change.

FCSC could be involved in Livable Frederick.

FCSC could initiate public outreach efforts regarding sustainability.

Next step, potentially break into subgroups to focus on some of the topics discussed.

For instance, Ron mentioned he would work with Shannon and Dawn on ideas to promote PACE. Faith noted that she is interested in the topic as well.

Ideas were also discussed about liaison opportunities with other commissions.

Commission Members Items of Interest

Ron – EV group performing school outreach efforts. Asking for schools that might be interested in the kids seeing the EVs. Ron noted that the Sierra Club Conservation Committee doesn't have an agriculture representative. The group is trying to engage in a dialog to bring farmers onboard. Looking for people with expertise in agriculture.

Faith – Noted that a Memorandum of Understanding has been developed between US Dept of Energy and USDA regarding rural energy investments. GW has a reduced fee certification for EVs (globally certified program for EVs). May be able to attend Clean City events to get information. American Council for Energy Efficient Economy – developed tool for local governments to see where they are at with energy performance.

Betty – Fort Detrick Restoration Advisory Board – Army sent out 80 page report with updates. Betty reviewed, commented, and received responses. Betty broached topic of communication with the City regarding a potential new road. The road is being designed by a civil engineering firm with an environmental subconsultant. Betty joined a climate change working group to help with reports.

Mark – attended a COG workshop and considering signing up for an energy committee.

Joe – upcoming legislation to advance composting in the state. Businesses within 30 miles of a composting facility would be required to participate in composting if it passes. On another note: Kisstheground.com has useful information. Frederick Rescue Mission will pickup uneaten, usable food from Lincoln Elementary on a regular basis. Joe will meeting with Terry Alban in February to discuss food conservation/composting efforts. The stream restoration on his property is nearly complete.

Public Comments:

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06.

The next meeting will be January 15, 2020.